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Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 08037 261525Z
ACTION NEA-11

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 8037

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FOR NEA - SAUNDERS FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (MONDALE, WALTER)
SUBJECT: VICE PRESIDENT'S TRIP: LIST OF QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTED ANSWERS

REF: (A) TEL AVIV 7665; (B) STATE 150629

REFTEL A. CONTAINS A LIST OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (REQUESTED IN REFTEL B) DESIGNED FOR USE IN PUBLIC OR SEMI-PUBLIC SETTINGS MORE THAN IN PRIVATE MEETINGS. FOLLOWING ARE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTED ANSWERS:
1.
Q. COULD YOU PLEASE TELL US WHY, AFTER IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT YOUR TRIP WOULD ONLY INCLUDE ISRAEL, YOU DECIDED TO VISIT EGYPT AS WELL?

A. THE PRINCIPAL PURPOSE OF MY TRIP HAS BEEN, OF COURSE, TO HONOR THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF ISRAEL, AND TO RE-EMPHASIZE, THROUGH THIS VISIT, THE CLOSE RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS AND BETWEEN THE PEOPLE OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES. PRESIDENT SADAT'S SUGGESTION THAT I STOP IN EGYPT PROVIDES ME WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO EMPHASIZE THERE, AS I HAVE DONE HERE IN ISRAEL, THE CONTINUING COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE PEACE PROCESS.
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2.
Q. WILL YOU BE CARRYING WITH YOU A MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT SADAT FROM PRIME MINISTER BEGIN? DO YOU EXPECT TO GET INTO THE DETAILS OF NEGOTIATIONS IN YOUR MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SADAT?

A. I INTEND TO REVIEW WITH PRESIDENT SADAT

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RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND EGYPT AND THE OUTLOOK FOR ACHIEVING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. I DO NOT EXPECT IN SUCH A BRIEF STOP, TO GET INTO THE DETAILS OF NEGOTIATIONS.

3.
Q. ON JUNE 21ST THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE SAID THAT THE U.S. REGRETS THAT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES DID NOT FULLY RESPOND TO THE TWO QUESTIONS PUT TO FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN IN APRIL. ON JUNE 22, PRESIDENT CARTER WAS QUOTED IN THE PRESS AS SAYING THAT PRESIDENT SADAT'S POSITION ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA WAS "VERY CONSTRUCTIVE" AND THAT THE U.S. "APPRECIATES HIS WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE THE PEACE PROCESS". IS THIS AN EXAMPLE OF US EVEN-HANDEDNESS? DOESN'T THE PRESIDENT APPRECIATE THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT'S WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE THE PEACE PROCESS?

A. THE UNITED STATES IS DEEPLY INTERESTED IN ASSISTING THE PARTIES MOST DIRECTLY CONCERNED AT THE MOMENT IN THE PEACE PROCESS TO RESUME DISCUSSION, TO EXPLORE WAYS OF MOVING AHEAD TOWARDS A PEACE SETTLEMENT. THE PRESIDENT WAS, I BELIEVE, SPEAKING WITH A VISITING EGYPTIAN PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION LEADER, AND HE WAS REFERRING SPECIFICALLY TO A STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT SADAT WHICH WAS POSITIVE ABOUT POSSIBLE FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS. OBVIOUSLY WE APPRECIATE THE IMPORTANT EFFORTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL IS MAKING ON BEHALF OF THE PURSUIT OF PEACE.

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4.
Q. PRESIDENT CARTER HAS BEEN BERY EMPHATIC ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS AROUND THE WORLD. YET IN ISRAEL, THERE HAS BEEN SERIOUS INFRINGEMENT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF RESIDENTS OF THE WEST BANK. A RECENT ISSUE OF TIME DESCRIBED SOME OF THESE ABUSES. WHY HAS THE UNITED STATES REMAINED SILENT ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS IN THIS CASE AND NOT IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD?

A. YOU ARE CORRECT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAS TAKEN A STRONG INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS - BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD. ISRAEL IS SURELY ON THE THE FREEST AND MOST DEMOCRATIC COUNTIRES IN THE WORLD. THERE IS A STRONG TRADITION HERE OF RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY AND THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL. AS TO THE SPECIFIC ISSUE YOU REFER TO, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS DISCUSSED THIS SUBJECT WITH THE ISRAELI AUTHORITIES IN THE PAST AND, IF APPROPRIATE, WILL DO SO IN THE FUTURE.

5.
Q. MANY ISRAELIS ARE DISAPPOINTED THAT ONCE AGAIN, A VISITING SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL HAS REFUSED TO PERMIT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT AND THE UNIFIED CITY GOVERNMENT OF JERUSALEM TO

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ESCORT HIM TO THE FAMOUS SITES OF EAST JERUSALEM. THIS IS
DESPITE THE FACT THAT EVEN PRESIDENT SADAT FOUND NO DIFFICULTY
IN THIS REGARD. DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TIME FOR THE UNITED
STATES TO DROP THIS POLICY, WHICH CAUSES SO MUCH UNNECESSARY
FRICTION BETWEEN US?

A. THE REASONS FOR THIS POLICY ARE OF COURSE RELATED TO THE
RECENT HISTORY OF THIS CITY. I LOOK FORWARD TO THE DAY WHEN
THIS LONG-ESTABLISHED POLICY OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WILL, AS
A RESULT OF PROGRESS IN THE PEACE PROCESS, NO LONGER BE NECESSARY.
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